

STARBLAZER

SPACE FICTION ADVENTURE IN PICTURES No. 51

14p



PRISONERS OF ZORR

STARBLAZER



BY THE
YEAR 2382 EARTH
WAS THE ADMINISTRATIVE
CENTRE OF THE GALACTIC
FOUNDATION. THE GIGANTIC SANDPOINT
MILITARY ACADEMY TRAINED A MULTI-
PLANETARY PEACE-KEEPING FORCE, AND THE
HIGHLIGHT OF EACH YEAR WAS THE PASSING
OUT PARADE WHEN ONLY THE BEST PUPILS
QUALIFIED. THE PLANET ZORR HAD OBSERVERS
PRESENT . . . AND THEY WERE INTERESTED
IN ONLY THE BEST.

THE PRISONERS

of

ZORR

AT SANDPOINT AEROCENTRE, THE LAST OF THE INVITED NATIONS ARRIVED.



THIS MUST BE THE OBSERVERS FROM CLASTON-3. THEY'RE LATE. CHECK THEIR PASSES AND TAKE THEM TO THE TRIAL AREA IMMEDIATELY. EVERYONE ELSE HAS BEEN ACCOUNTED FOR.

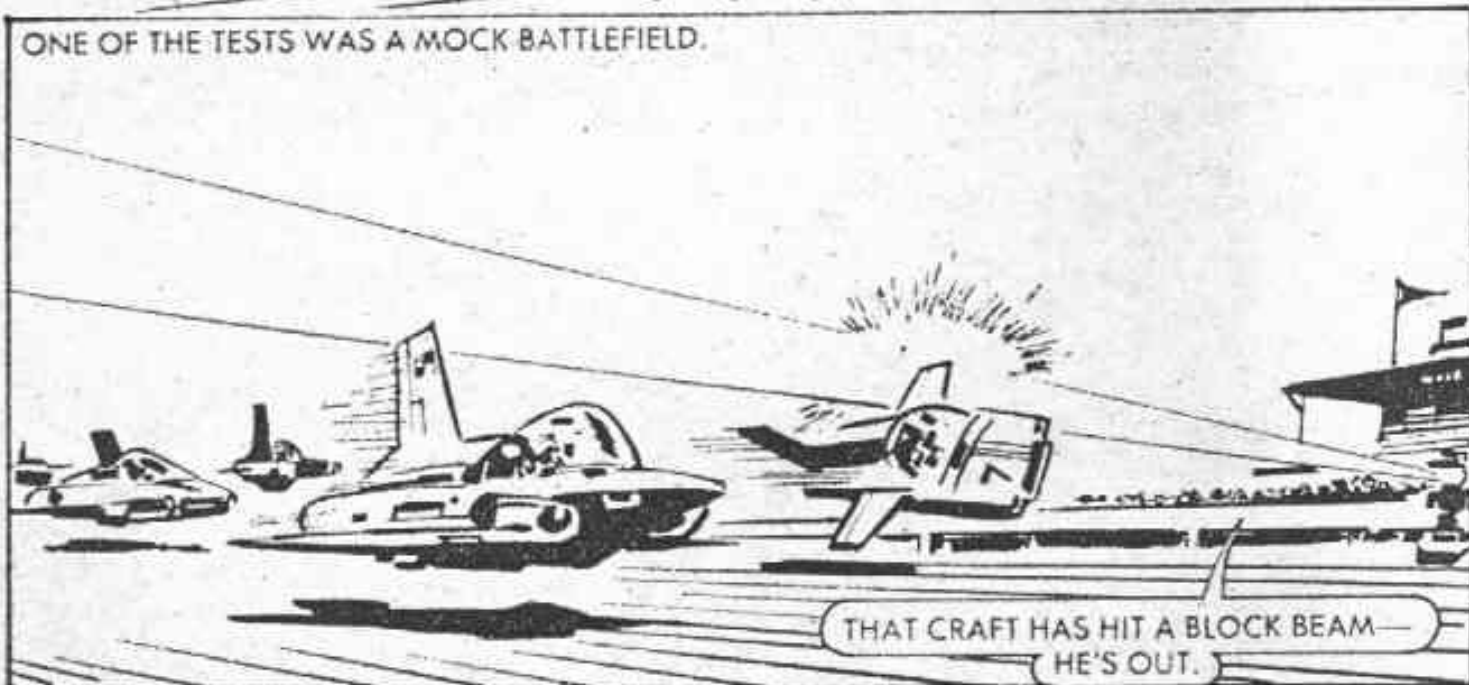


A FERRYCRRAFT TOOK THE TWO OBSERVERS TO
THE TRIAL AREA.

THE EVENT HAS JUST STARTED.
YOU WILL NOT MISS MUCH.



ONE OF THE TESTS WAS A MOCK BATTLEFIELD.





AS SOL BANKED TO AVOID A MINE, THE CRAFT'S FORCEFIELD BRUSHED IT ...

SOL'S TOUCHED ONE ... HE'S
IN TROUBLE.



THE SMALL CRAFT COULD ONLY REACH AN ALTITUDE OF SOME SIX FEET, BUT HAMMON
HAD PLANS ...

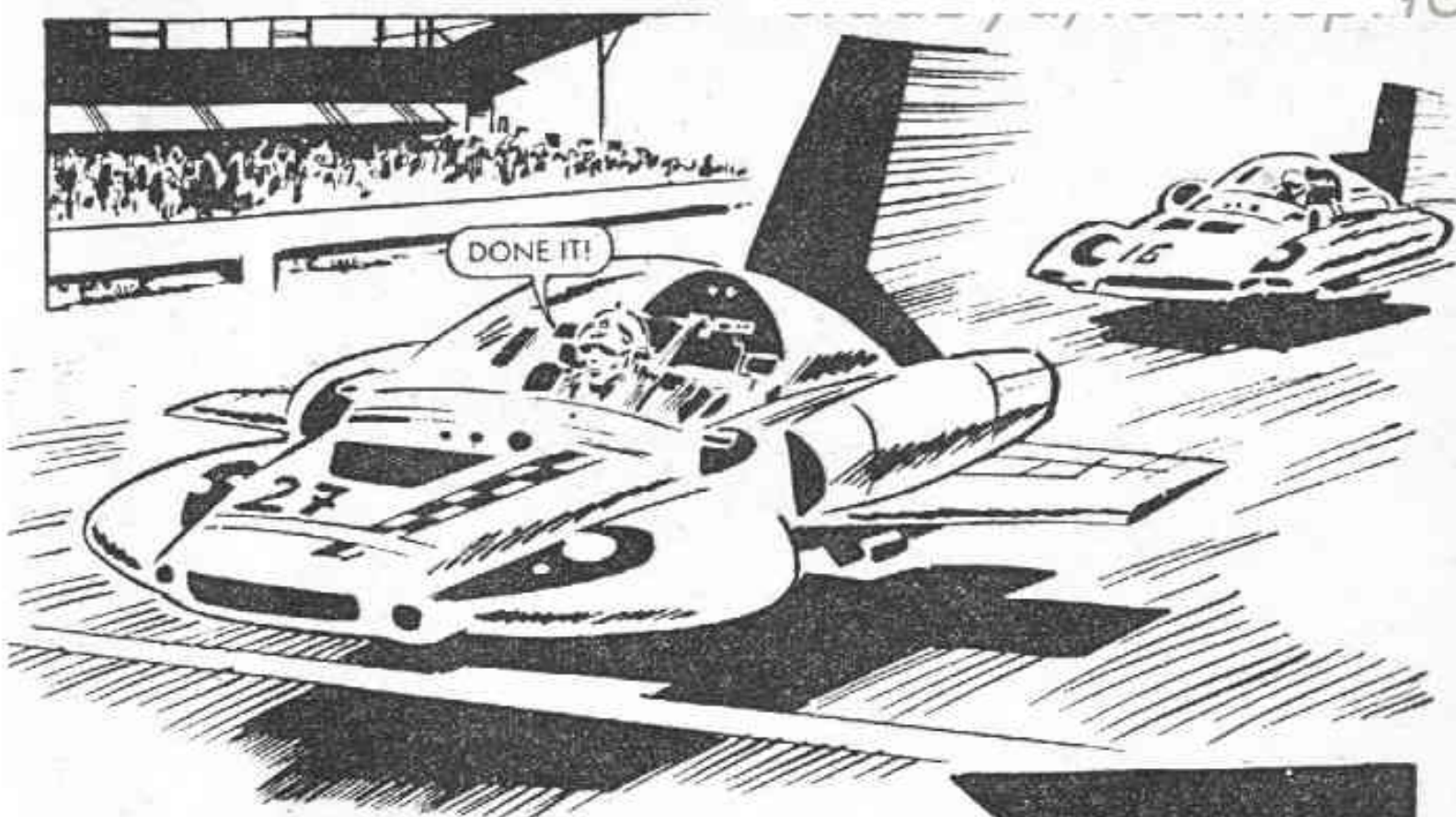


... HE ACCELERATED HIS CRAFT, BOUNCED OVER SOL'S, AND INTO THE LEAD.

SPEED AND POWER FELL AT OVER SIX FEET,
SOL CREPT BACK TO LEVEL TERMS.

THAT SHOULD STRAIGHTEN
HIM OUT.





THEY'RE BOTH FROM HERE ON EARTH. ONE OF THEM WILL WIN THE TITLE OF 'CADET OF THE YEAR.' BOTH HAVE A COMMANDING LEAD OVER THE REST OF US IN SHOOTING, LEADERSHIP TESTS, NAVIGATION, AND PRACTICALLY ALL THE OTHER TRAINING PROGRAMMES.



SOL AND HAMMON WERE PRESENTED TO ACADEMY HEAD, MARSHAL HISSEN.

YOUNG MEN, YOU ARE A CREDIT TO THIS ACADEMY. THE ONLY POINT IN DOUBT, IS WHICH OF YOU TWO WILL FINISH THE YEAR WITH THE MOST POINTS.



BOTH OF US WILL TRY TO BEAT THE OTHER, SIR, THOUGH NEITHER WILL RESENT IT IF HE IS BEATEN.

AS SOL AND HAMMON RETURNED TO THEIR QUARTERS...

CONGRATULATIONS, YOUNG MEN! OUR MASTER WISHES YOU TO LEAVE THE ACADEMY AND DEPART WITH US IMMEDIATELY. THESE FIVE HUNDRED CREDITS ARE BUT A FRACTION OF THE REWARDS AWAITING YOU.



GREAT PRESTIGE AND POWER AWAITS YOU. OUR MASTER HAS NEED OF YOUR ABILITIES.

OUR INTENTION IS TO JOIN
PEACEFORCE — NOT BECOME
MERCENARIES.

FOOLS! HOW CAN THEY TURN DOWN
SUCH WEALTH AND POWER? OUR
ORDERS ARE TO RETURN TO ZORR
WITH THE BEST CADETS. OUR MASTER
MUST BE OBEYED.



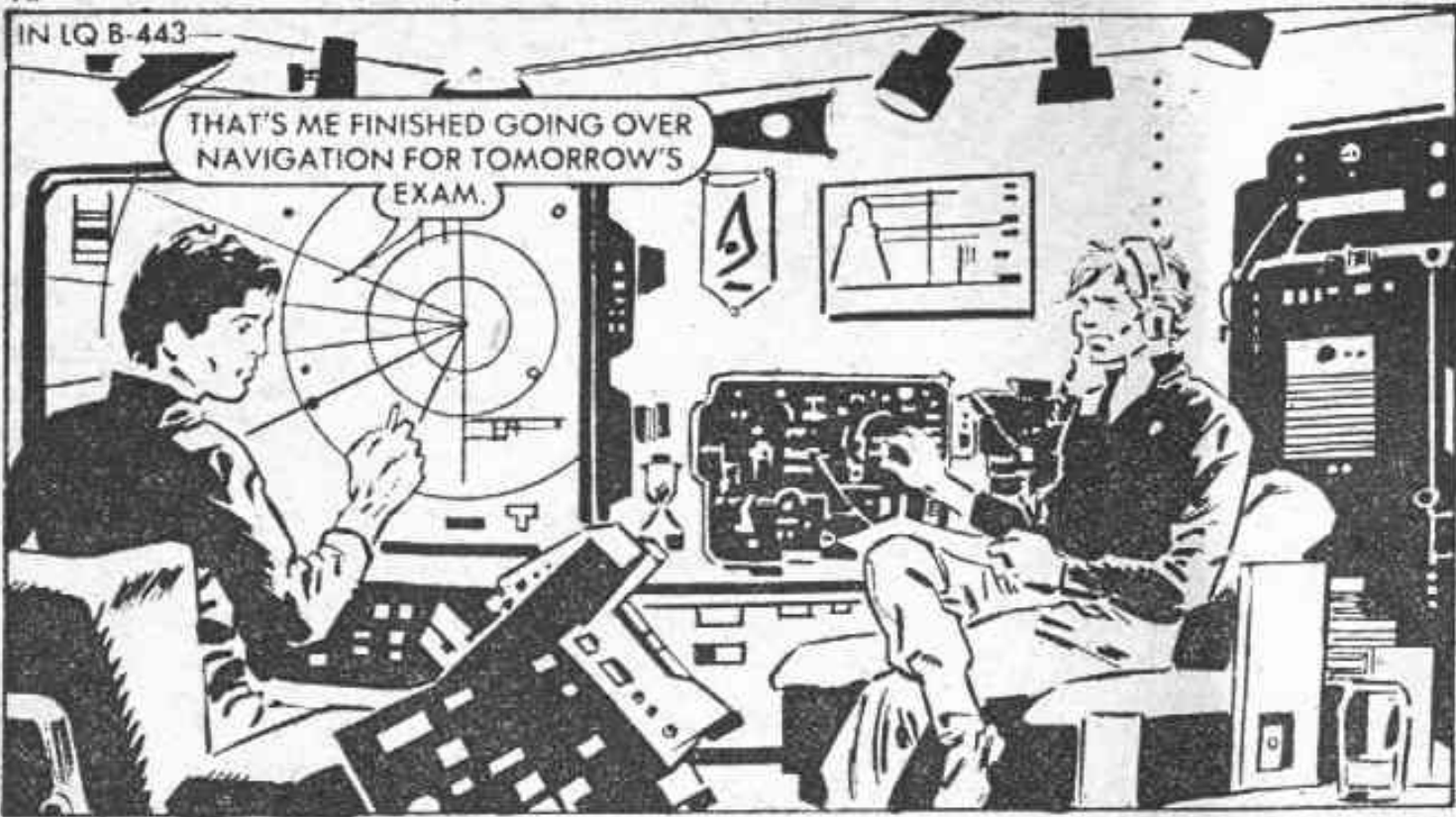
THAT NIGHT ...

WE LEAVE TONIGHT. THE WHOLE CAMP IS
COVERED WITH A SOPHISTICATED FIELD OF
ENERGY, DESIGNED TO TRIGGER AN ALARM IF
ANYTHING MOVES. OUR TECHNICIANS HAVE
DEVELOPED A SYSTEM TO GIVE US PROTECTION.

THE FIELD
NULLIFYER WORKS!
LIVING QUARTER B-443
IS THE ONE WE SEEK, HIGOR.



IN LQ B-443



THAT'S ME FINISHED GOING OVER
NAVIGATION FOR TOMORROW'S
EXAM.



AN EXPLOSION SHOOK THE BUILDING—

YOU'RE COMING WITH US—
TO THE PLANET ZORR ...

WHAT THE ... STUNGASI!

THE UNCONSCIOUS CADETS WERE CARRIED TO THE SPACESHIP.

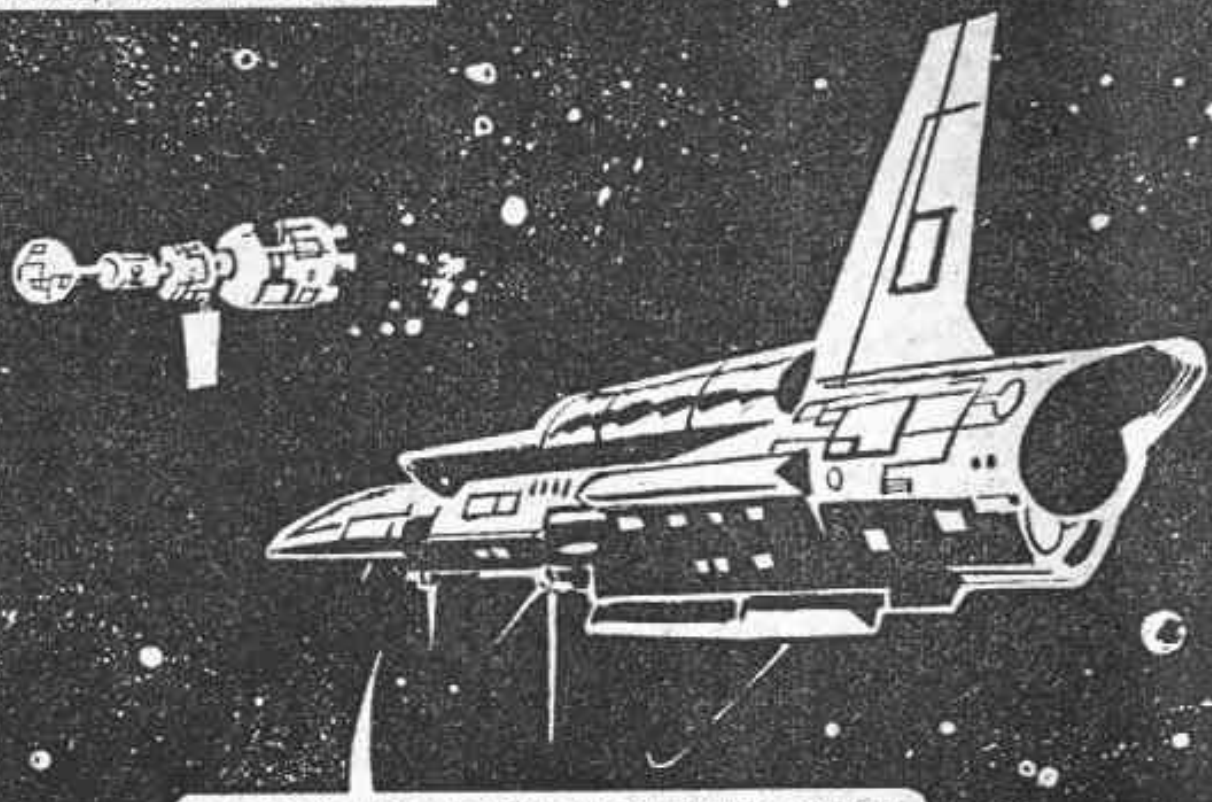


AS THE CRAFT THUNDERED AWAY—

THE CLASTON-3 SHIP IS LEAVING. THEY MUST BE AWARE OF THE BAN ON NIGHT-TIME TAKE-OFFS. ORDER A SECURITY ALERT.



MEANWHILE, FAR OUT IN SPACE—



THAT SHIP APPEARS TO HAVE SUFFERED RECENT DAMAGE: INFLECTED BY SOME KIND OF WEAPON, I'D SAY. CALL PEACEFORCE.

ABOARD THE DAMAGED SHIP.

MURDERED! THESE MEN ARE FROM CLASTON-3.

SIR, A MESSAGE HAS COME THROUGH FROM EARTH. TWO CADETS HAVE BEEN KIDNAPPED FROM SANDPOINT. H.Q. HAS PLOTTED THE KIDNAPPERS' COURSE INTO THIS REGION.



THE KIDNAPPERS MUST HAVE
MURDERED THE REAL OBSERVERS TO
GET HOLD OF THEIR ELECTRONIC
PASS. WONDER WHY THEY TOOK
AWAY THOSE YOUNG MEN...

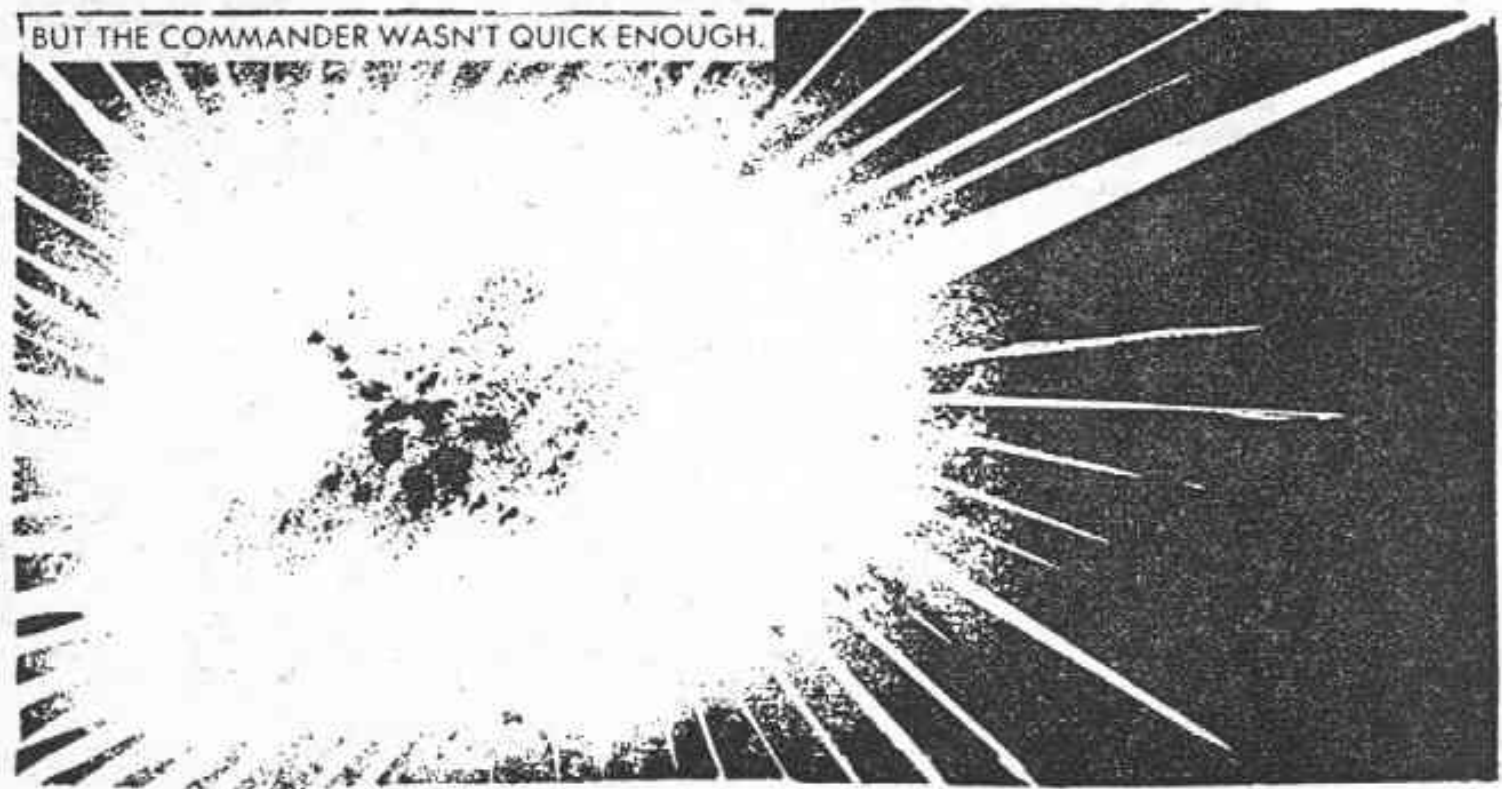
COMMANDER, I HAVE A READING AT
01127-NT4 BEARING TOWARDS
ALPHA 371. WE MAY BE ABLE TO
INTERCEPT.

INTERCEPTED! LAWFLEET ORDERS VESSEL
TK-20 TO HEAVE TO. FAILURE TO COMPLY
WILL RESULT IN USE OF FORCE.

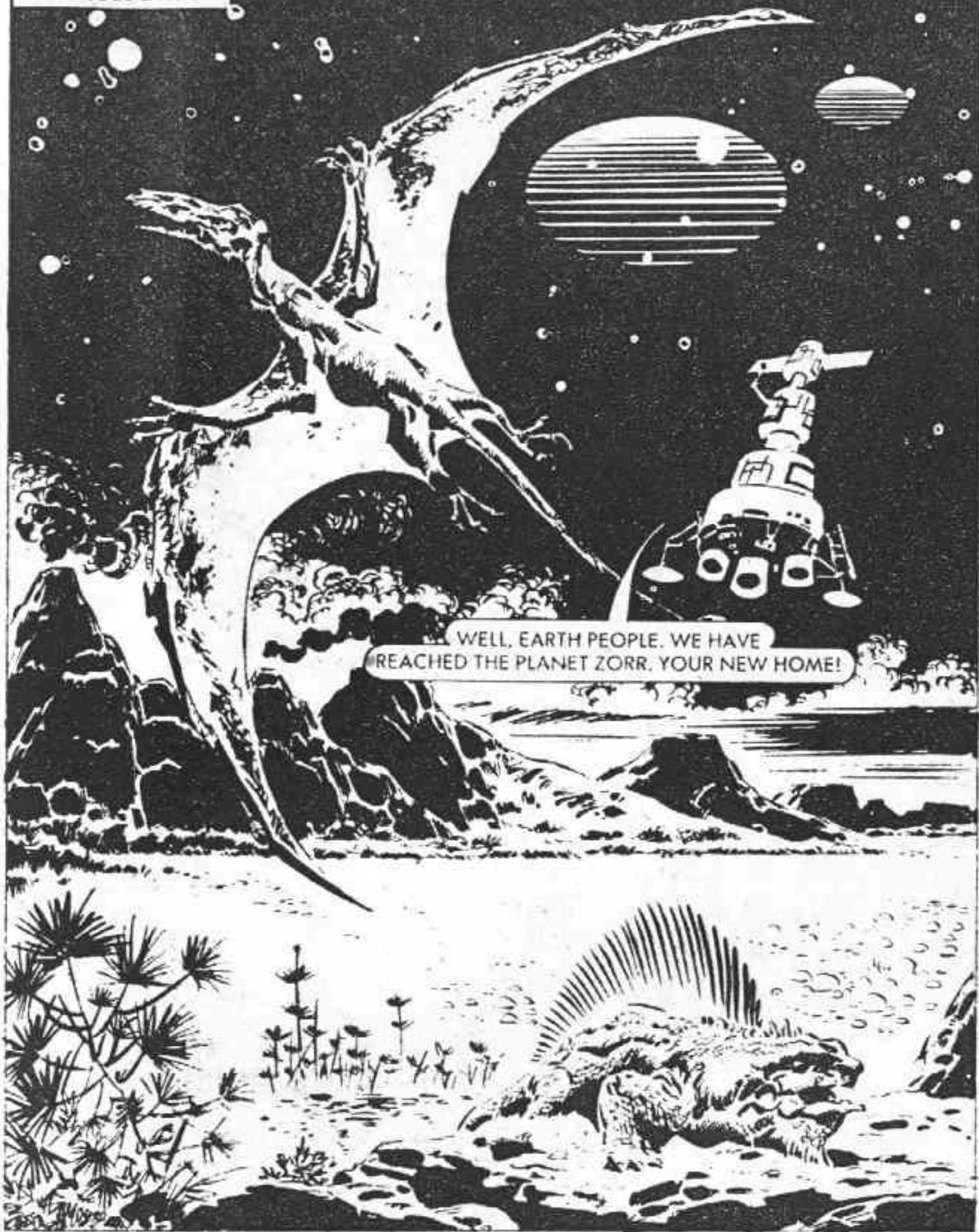
IS THAT SO?
FIRE TUBE 1!



BUT THE COMMANDER WASN'T QUICK ENOUGH.



47 PARSECS LATER—



THE SHIP LANDED.

THE ROBOT GUARDS WILL TAKE OVER.
WE LEAVE YOU NOW!



LOOK, SOL, THERE ARE OTHERS OF OUR
AGE IN THIS PLACE.

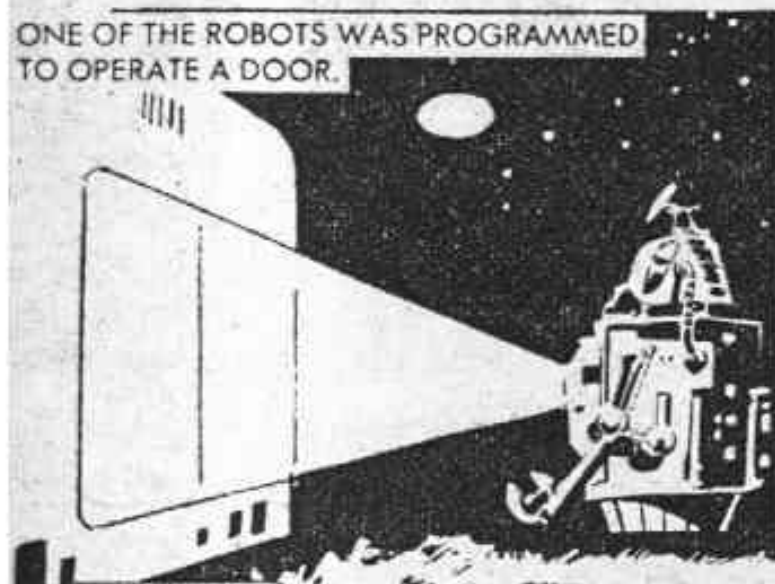


PROCEED! IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO
ESCAPE. THERE IS A FORCE FIELD
AROUND THE PERIMETER. WE PATROL
AT ALL TIMES.

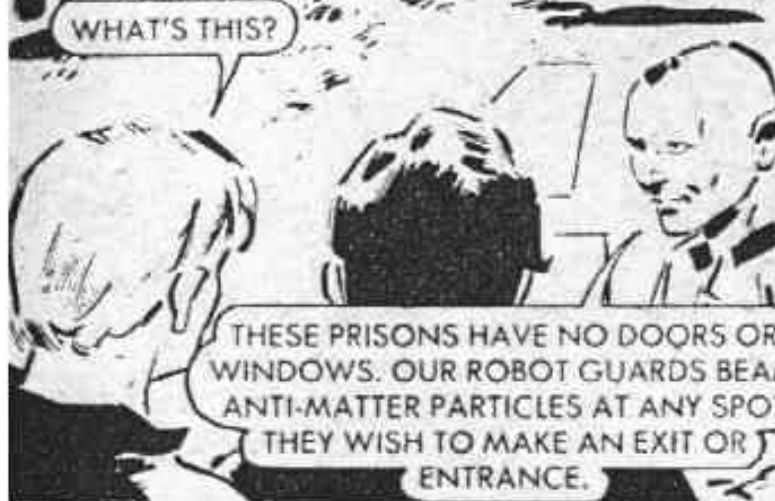


I CAN HARDLY WELCOME YOU TO THIS PLACE SINCE NONE OF US WISHES TO BE HERE! HOWEVER, I AM SCHULANN. MY JOB IS TO SETTLE IN NEW CAPTIVES.

ONE OF THE ROBOTS WAS PROGRAMMED TO OPERATE A DOOR.



WHAT'S THIS?



THESE PRISONS HAVE NO DOORS OR WINDOWS. OUR ROBOT GUARDS BEAM ANTI-MATTER PARTICLES AT ANY SPOT THEY WISH TO MAKE AN EXIT OR ENTRANCE.



HUT B5—YOUR NEW HOME. WHEN WE HAVE ALL ENTERED, THE DOOR WILL VANISH.

MEANWHILE, ZORR, RULER OF THE PLANET NAMED AFTER HIM, WAS ENJOYING AN AFTERNOON'S SPORT.









IN THE PRISON HUT—

THIS TALK OF ESCAPE IS MADNESS.
ANY SUCH ATTEMPT WILL FAIL AND
CAN ONLY LEAD TO HARDSHIP FOR
THE REST OF US. LET US MAKE THE
BEST OF THINGS HERE.

I SHALL TRY TO LEAVE THIS PRISON.
YOU MAY LICK YOUR MASTER'S
BOOTS IF YOU WISH!

I AM NO COWARD... AND I
SHALL SHOW YOU.

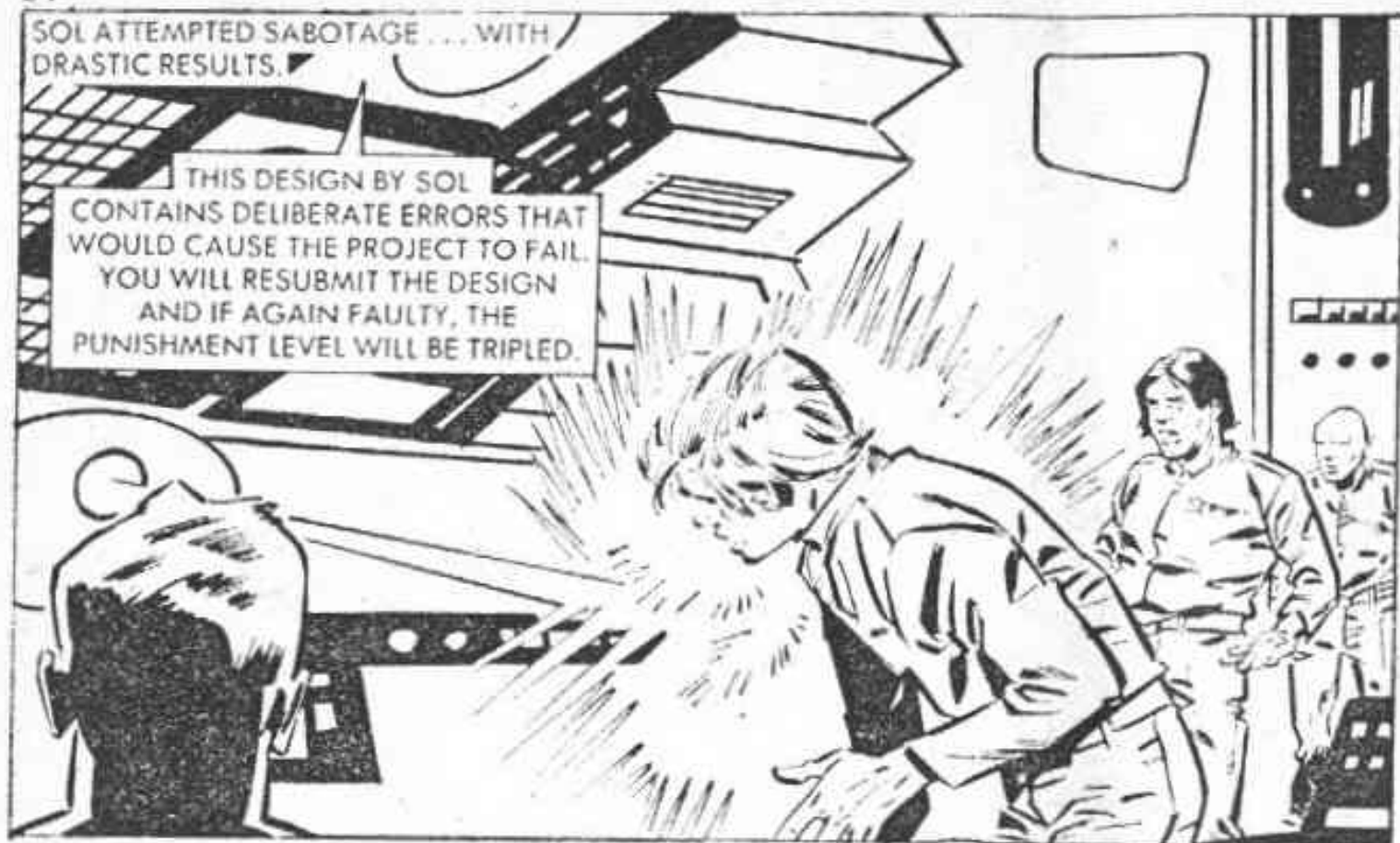
NO TARDON! YOU DON'T KNOW
YOUR OWN STRENGTH.

I'LL CRACK YOUR SKULL.



SOL ATTEMPTED SABOTAGE ... WITH
DRASTIC RESULTS.

THIS DESIGN BY SOL
CONTAINS DELIBERATE ERRORS THAT
WOULD CAUSE THE PROJECT TO FAIL.
YOU WILL RESUBMIT THE DESIGN
AND IF AGAIN FAULTY, THE
PUNISHMENT LEVEL WILL BE TRIPLED.



OVER THE NEXT FEW DAYS SOL AND HAMMON GATHERED AS MUCH INFORMATION
AS POSSIBLE TO AID AN ESCAPE PLAN.

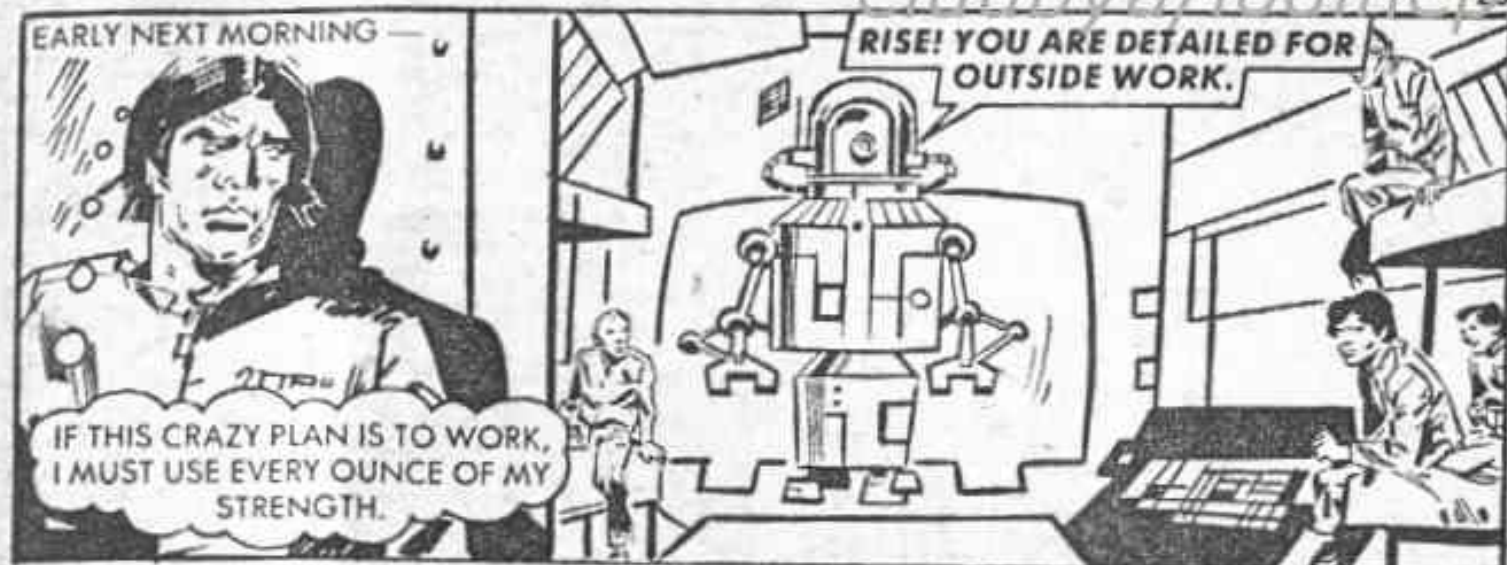


I WAS DETAILED TO ASSIST A ROBOT REPLACE A
PART IN THE COMPUTER ANALYSER. DURING THE
WORK, I WAS ABLE TO SECURE A PORTION OF
MICRO-FILM. IT REVEALS THE LOCATION OF A
SPACESHIP BASE BEYOND THE JUNGLE THAT
SURROUNDS OUR CAMP.

HAMMON AND I HAVE WORKED
OUT A POSSIBLE MEANS OF
ESCAPE.



TARDON HAS BEEN PUNISHED SO
BADLY LATELY FOR PROJECT
FAILURES THAT HE INTENDS TO TAKE
ANY CHANCE OF ESCAPE. WE NEED
HIS STRENGTH.





ZORR HAS MONITORED EVERY PART OF THE ESCAPE.



THE REGION IS MY PRIVATE ZOO. FIRST, LET THEM TASTE THE TERROR OF MY BLOOD HUNTERS FROM THE DARK WORLD OF BEJAW!

DEEP IN THE ZORRIAN JUNGLE A CAGE OPENED, RELEASING HIDEOUS BEJAW BLOOD HUNTERS.



A GROUP OF PRISONERS WERE HEADING TOWARDS THE HEART OF THE DESOLATE REGION.



ACCORDING TO THE MAP I COPIED FROM THE MICRO-FILM ...

I-LOOK!



RUN FOR YOUR LIVES!

THE PLANT'S ALIVE.





THE YOUNG MEN STAGGERED CLEAR OF THE DEADLY GASSES.

SAFE — THEY'RE ALL DEAD.



THE SPACESHIP BASE LIES AT THE FOOT OF THESE MOUNTAINS TO THE EAST. LET US CONTINUE. WE DARE NOT REST.



EVEN AS THEY STARTED TOWARDS THE DISTANT HILLS, ZORR'S SEEKER ROBOTS FOUND THEM.



THE ROBOTS HAVE SEEN US.
INTO THE JUNGLE, IT'S OUR ONLY HOPE.

THEY'RE LOOKING FOR US WITH
SEARCH PATROLS. WE'LL HAVE TO
STICK UNDER COVER FROM NOW
ON.

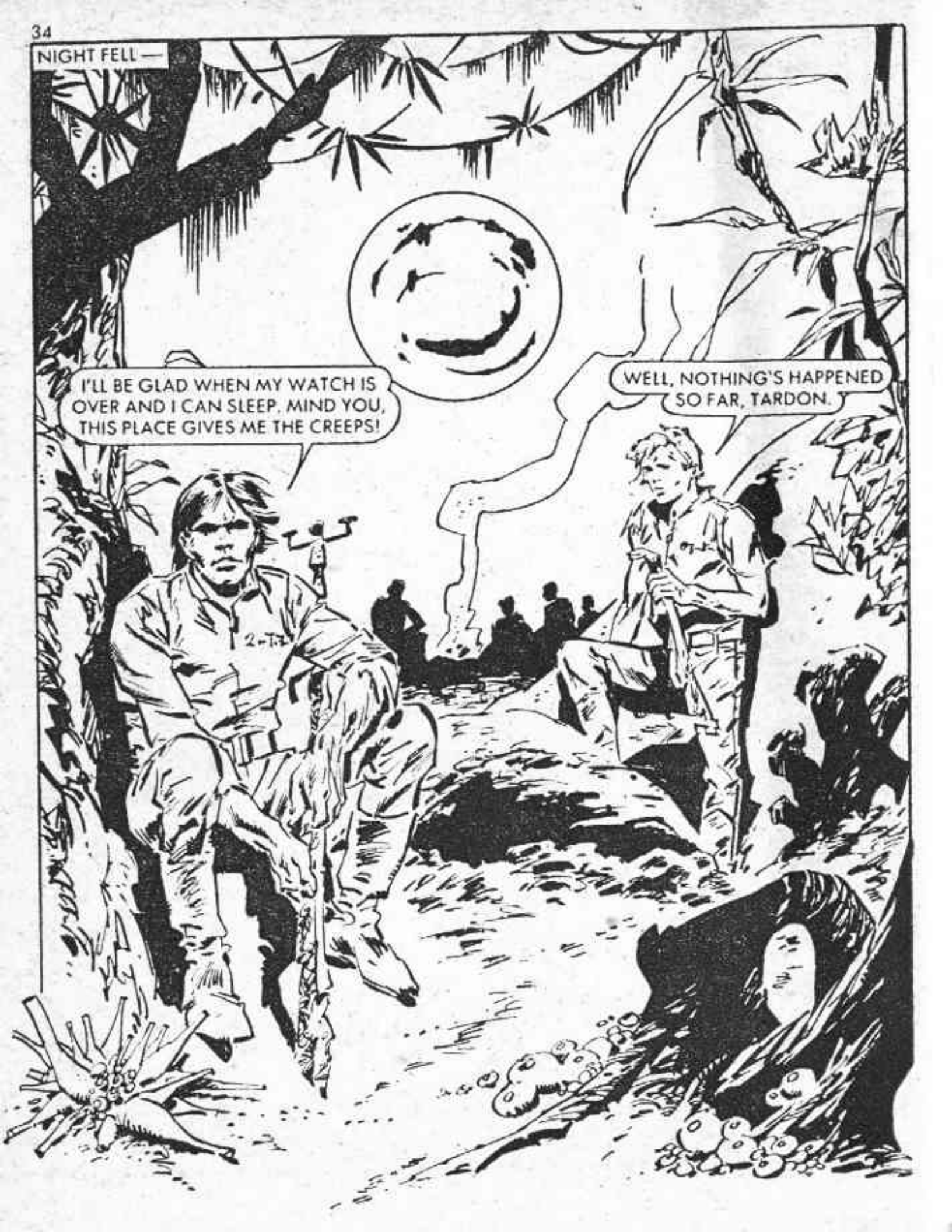
BUT IN THE JUNGLE —



THE REMAINING FEW PRISONERS FOUGHT HARD.



THEY'VE HAD ENOUGH.



I'LL BE GLAD WHEN MY WATCH IS OVER AND I CAN SLEEP. MIND YOU, THIS PLACE GIVES ME THE CREEPS!

WELL, NOTHING'S HAPPENED SO FAR, TARDON.



AS THE FIREBALLS CLOSED IN, THEY SCOOPED WATER OVER THEM. THE RESULTANT REACTION ENDED THE PROBLEM.



WHAT AN EXPLOSION.

I WILL TAKE CONTROL. WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO THE PARTY DURING THE NIGHT?



MORE HAVE DIED. NOW THEY CROSS THE DESERT.





EVENTUALLY THEY ARRIVED AT THE MAP REFERENCE . . .

WHERE IS THE BASE?
THERE IS NOTHING HERE.

THERE IS NO BASE! THE MICRO FILM WAS
PLANTED SO IT MIGHT BE STOLEN. FOLLOW US,
OR MY MEN WILL VAPE YOU.

ALL THAT KILLING FOR A GAME! HOW
MANY OF US ARE LEFT?

THIRTY! THE THIRTY FIT ENOUGH TO
UNDERTAKE THE GREAT TASK I HAVE
IN MIND.



THE PRISONERS WERE SHOWN THE ZORR INVASION FORCE.

NOW SEE THE ARMIES COMMANDED BY GENERAL VALCAN! YOUR JOB WILL BE TO ENSURE THEY ARE TRANSPORTED SAFELY TO THEIR DESTINATION. ONE DAY, YOU WILL BE PROUD AND WILLING TO FIGHT WITH US. YOU WILL SEE!



THE TOUR IS OVER! YOU WILL BE TAKEN TO YOUR NEW QUARTERS. TOMORROW, YOU WILL COMMENCE TRAINING FOR YOUR PART IN THE GRAND DESIGN.



THE CAPTIVES WERE TAKEN TO A MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT.

THE BAND IS IMPOSSIBLE TO REMOVE. ACKNOWLEDGE ME AS YOUR NEW MASTER!

NO CHANCE—MURDERER.

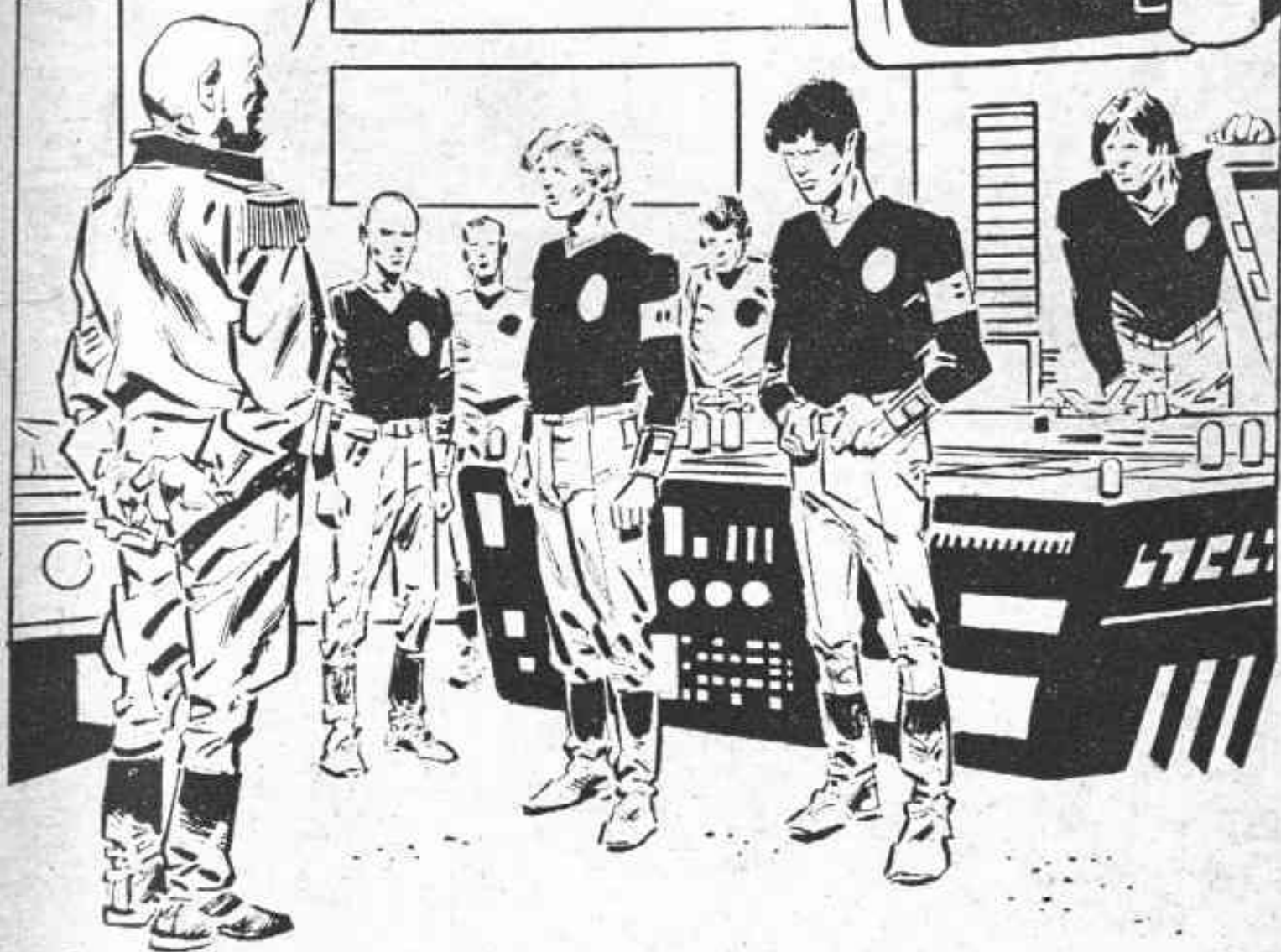


THROUGH THE WRIST BAND, WE CAN DIRECT LEVELS OF PAIN A THOUSAND TIMES MORE TERRIBLE THAN THE WORST TORTURE. NOW YOU WILL OBEY ME.



SOON AFTER —

YOUR LIVING QUARTERS. AN IMPROVEMENT ON THE LAST, EH? THERE ARE GAMES YOU MAY PLAY—DESIGNED TO SHARPEN YOUR WITS AND CO-ORDINATION.



AFTER ZORR HAD LEFT—

ZORR MEANS TO CONQUER THE ENTIRE GALAXY. HE SAID THAT THEN WE WOULD BE REWARDED WITH WEALTH AND POWER.

HE NEEDS PILOTS TO COMMAND HIS DRAGON SHIPS. ZORR PRODUCES WARRIORS, BUT FEW PILOTS CAPABLE OF HANDLING SOPHISTICATED FIGHTING VESSELS.



THE THOUGHT OF HELPING TO CONQUER THE GALAXY IS HIDEOUS. WE MUST FIND A WAY TO NULLIFY THE WRIST BANDS.

TARDON NO LONGER WISHES TO ACCEPT THE RULES OF TYRANTS.



ZORR PERSONALLY CONDUCTED THE FINAL TEST.

THIS TEST WILL TOUGHEN YOU
PHYSICALLY. I NEED YOUNG SUPER-
MEN TO FLY THE DRAGON SHIPS. WE
SHALL CLIMB TO THE PEAK, AND TO
PROVE IT CAN BE DONE, I SHALL RUN
WITH YOU!



TWENTY MINUTES LATER

I CAN'T KEEP
THIS UP.



YOU'D BETTER, OR I'LL GIVE THE
PAIN CONTROL DIAL A LITTLE TWIST!

AFTER A LONG, EXHAUSTING RUN—

I NEVER THOUGHT
I'D MAKE IT.

YOU WON'T STAY HERE LONG.
SOON THE STUGGLE WILL RISE
FROM THE INTERIOR. THEN YOU
MUST DO EXACTLY THE SAME AS I—
OR DIE!



JUPE... A MECHANICAL
SPIDER.

THERE IS ONLY ONE ESCAPE
FROM THE STUGGLE. YOU
MUST LEAP INTO SPACE
AFTER ME.

BUT IT'S TWO THOUSAND
FEET TO THE GROUND.



AFTER WEEKS OF ARDUOUS PHYSICAL TRAINING, THE CAPTIVES WERE DETAILED TO THEIR DRAGON SHIPS.



YOU MANOEUVRED YOURSELF INTO A POSITION WHERE THE OTHER SHIP COULD GET A SHOT AT YOU. STILL, YOU DID CO-ORDINATE THE DEFLECTORS AND CAUSE A MISS. JUST AS WELL THIS IS A TRAINING FLIGHT.

REMEMBER THAT ALTHOUGH ROBOTS AND COMPUTERS OPERATE THIS SHIP, YOU, TARDON AND SCHULANN, ARE THE BRAINS THAT DIRECT THEIR DECISIONS.



THIS IS A NIGHTMARE. IF ZORR THINKS YOU ARE NOT TRYING HARD ENOUGH, HE INFLECTS HIDEOUS PAIN THROUGH THE WRIST BAND.

ENERGISE THREE AND FOUR DEFLECTORS BEARING RED 8600. STAND BY TO FIRE MAIN ANTI-MATTER WEAPONS. CO-ORDINATES 646462.



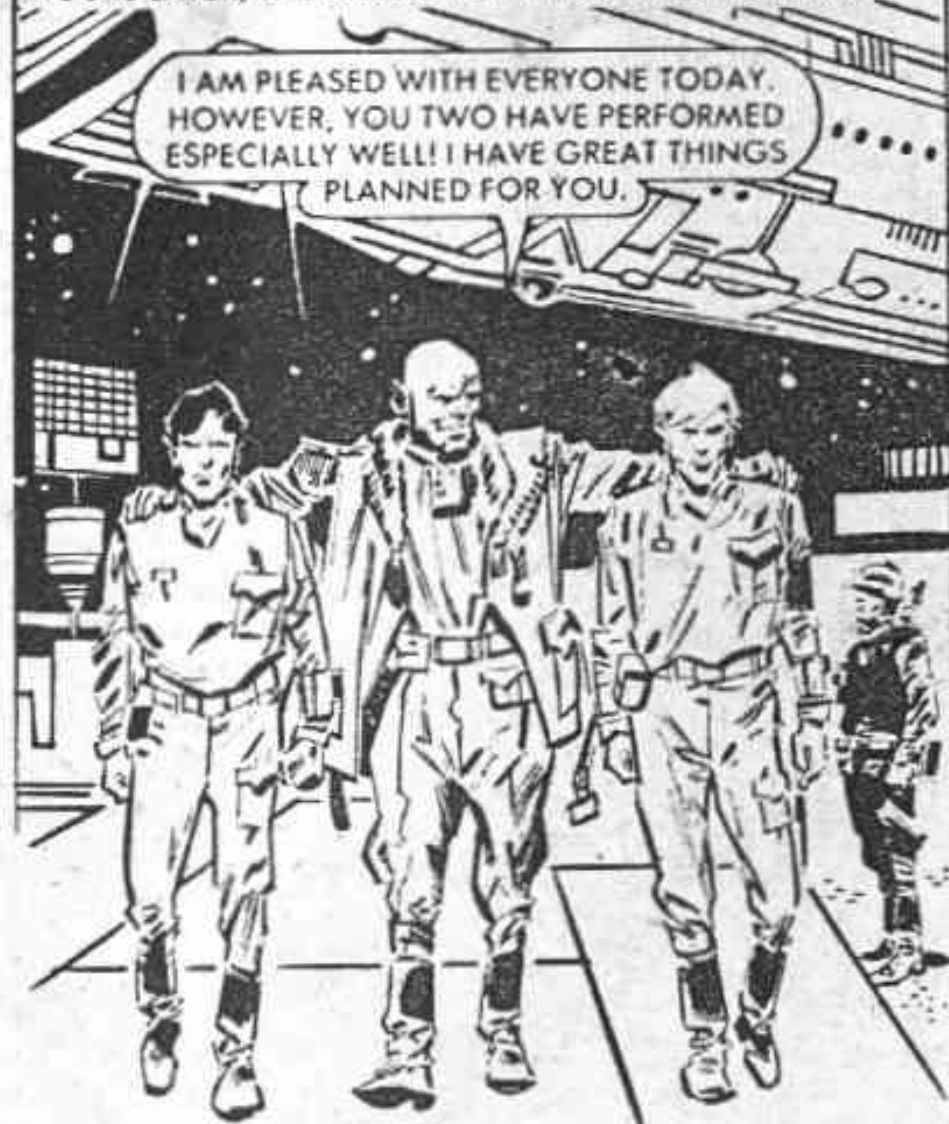
SUCH AN ATTACK PATTERN IS UNLIKELY TO SUCCEED.



YOU SEE, COMMANDER ZANN, AS THE TARGET SHIP WAS CREWED BY AN EARTH MOCK UP CREW, ONLY THE IRRATIONAL REACTIONS OF A FELLOW EARTH CREW COULD COPE.

HOURS LATER, THE DRAGON SHIP RETURNED TO ZORR.

I AM PLEASED WITH EVERYONE TODAY. HOWEVER, YOU TWO HAVE PERFORMED ESPECIALLY WELL! I HAVE GREAT THINGS PLANNED FOR YOU.



FOR MANY TIME PERIODS, THE PRISONERS WERE KEPT HARD AT WORK ON THE MOST INTENSIVE AND ARDUOUS TRAINING PROGRAMMES.

THE TRAINING HERE IS VERY GOOD ... BETTER THAN SAND-POINT. BUT WE ARE TRAINING TO FIGHT FOR A VILE CAUSE. IF ONLY WE COULD ...



WE'RE TREATED WELL. YOU SHOULD BE PROUD THAT ZORR IS TURNING YOU INTO AN ELITE PILOT.



DESPITE A LONG DISCUSSION NO IDEAS WERE FORTHCOMING. NEXT DAY—

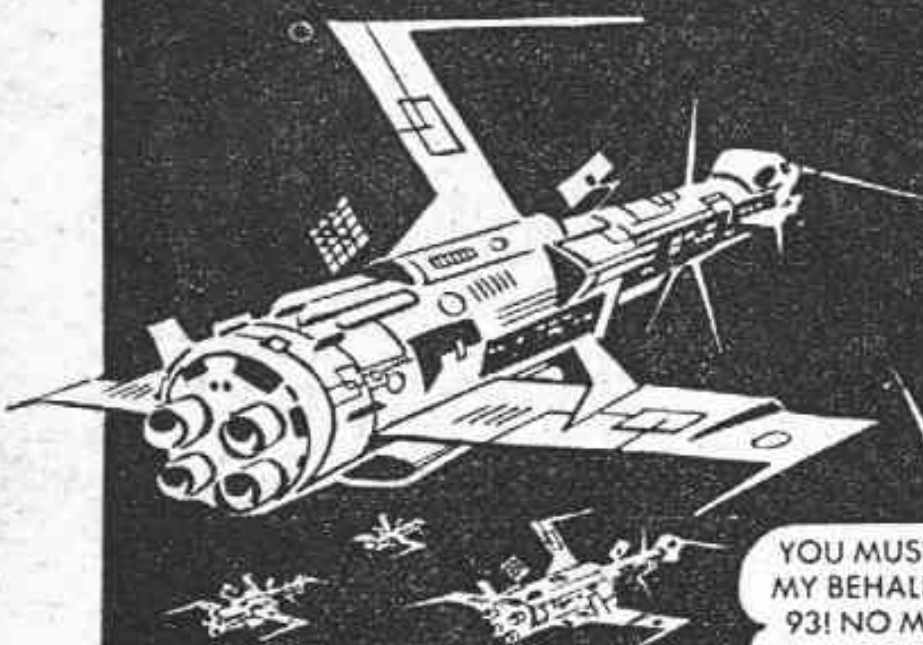
YOU ARE ALL TO UNDERGO A FINAL TEST ...



UP TO NOW YOU HAVE OBEYED ME BECAUSE OF THE WRIST BANDS YOU WEAR. MANY OF YOU ARE NOW JUSTLY PROUD OF YOUR ELITE STATUS AND WISH TO FIGHT. A RAID ON CABEN-93 WILL TEST YOUR LOYALTY.



THE ZORR SPACESHIPS ROARED TOWARDS CABEN-93—



YOU MUST PROVE YOU ARE WILLING TO KILL ON MY BEHALF. YOU WILL ATTACK CITIES ON CABEN-93! NO MERCY MUST BE SHOWN TO THE FOOLS WHO INHABIT OUR NEIGHBOURING PLANET. FAIL AND YOU WILL DIE.

ZORR ACCOMPANIED SOL AND HAMMON ABOARD THEIR VESSEL.

THE FOOLS ON CABEN-93 COUNT FOR NOTHING! YOU TWO ARE THE BEST OF MY CAPTIVES, YET I AM UNCERTAIN THAT YOU WILL KILL FOR ME, I WILL REMOVE THE BAND IF YOU OBEY ORDERS.





TERROR REIGNED ON CABEN-93 WHEN THE OCCUPANTS OF THE CITIES SAW THE DRAGON SHIPS APPROACHING.





BUT DOWN ON BRINDMANOR...



DURING THE JOURNEY BACK TO BASE—

HE'S DEEP IN THOUGHT! HERE'S OUR CHANCE TO BEAM A SIGNAL TO THE DEAD WORLD OF ELKAI. IT'S ALMOST OUTSIDE MAXIMUM RANGE OF A DRAGON SHIP TRANSMITTER—SO IT'S A LONG SHOT IT WILL GET PICKED UP.

PICKED UP BY WHO? THERE'S NO ONE THERE.

YES... BUT WE CAN BOUNCE IT OFF THE WARNING BEAM. I KNOW THE SIGNAL WILL BE WEAK, BUT WITH A BIT OF LUCK IT'LL BE MONITORED.

LATER—

HERE'S TO US! A TOAST TO THE YOUNG DRAGON SHIP COMMANDERS!

IT DESTROYS ME TO SEE HOW ZORR HAS CONVERTED EVEN SOL AND HAMMON TO HIS CAUSE. I ALONE RETAIN THE WRIST BAND.

SHORTLY AFTERWARDS—



AS THE FIGHTERS WARPED AWAY, THE
TRANSPORTS LOADED UP.



THE GREAT ARMADA HURTTLED THROUGH SPACE TOWARDS EARTH.

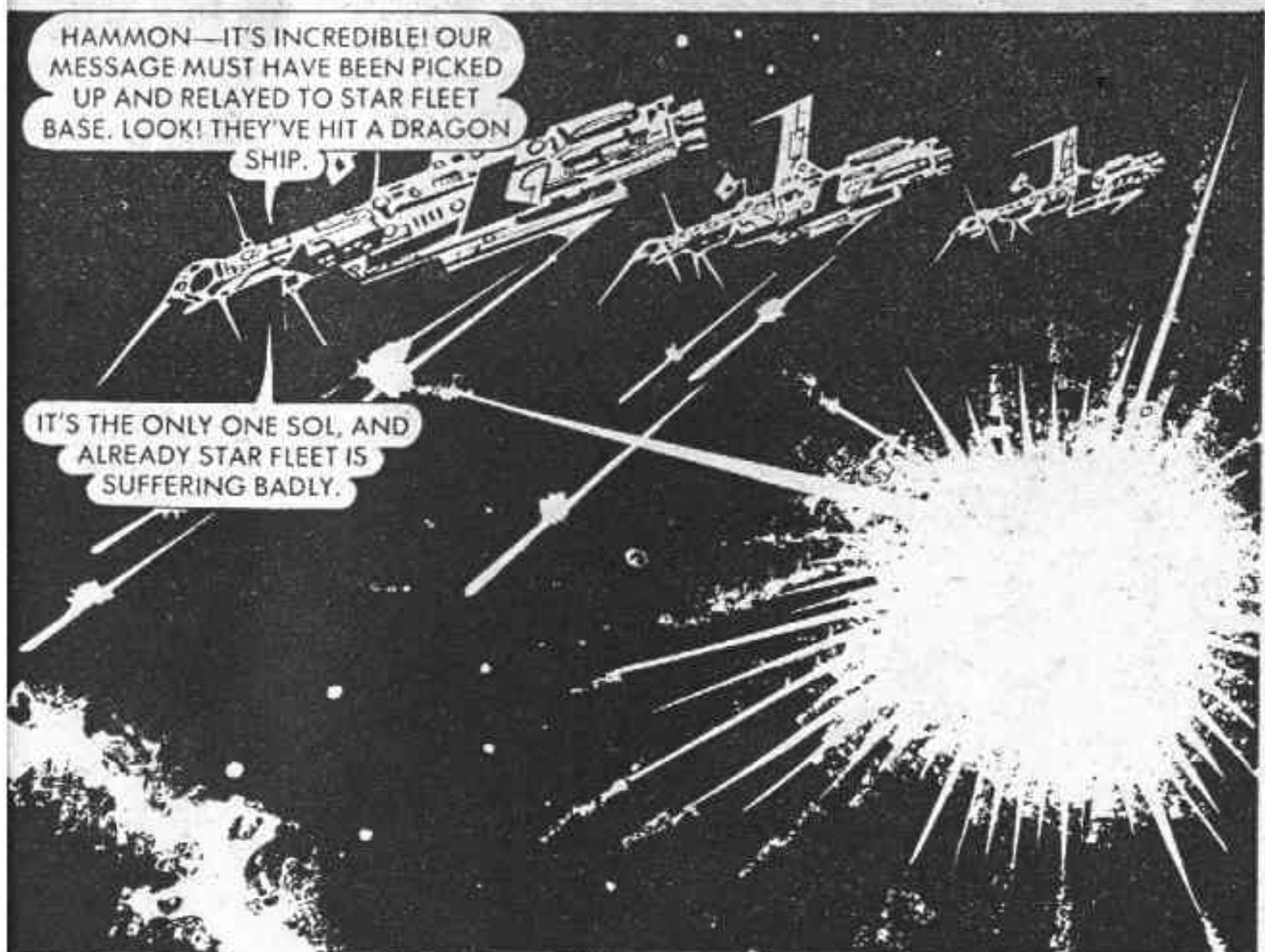
ALL DRAGON SHIPS EXCEPT
CLOSE ESCORTS WILL FOLLOW ME.

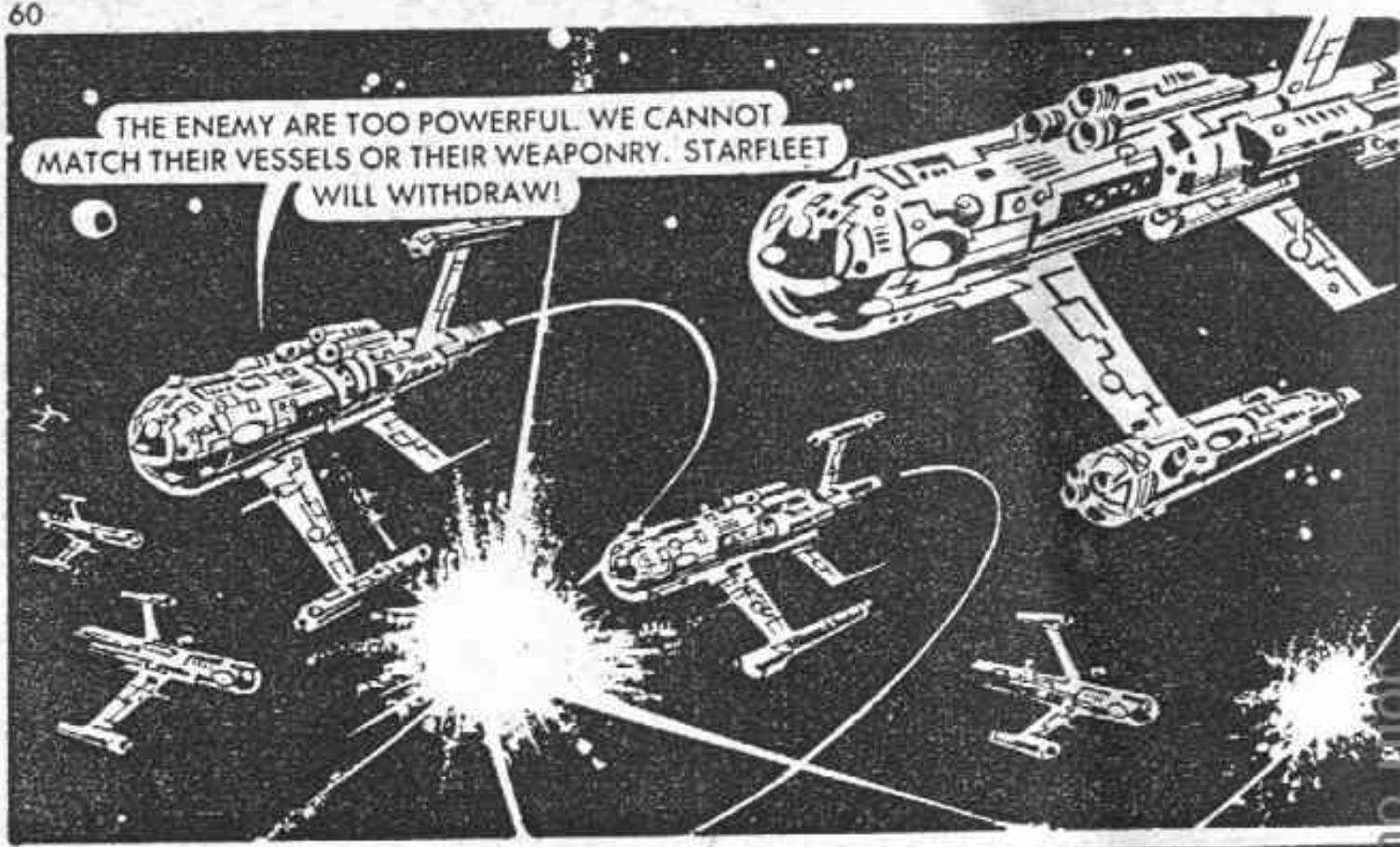
ZORR CRACKLED ONTO A VID SCREEN—

EARTHMEN—YOUR PLANET'S
DEFENCES MUST BE ANNIHILATED.

IT IS NECESSARY.








THE ENEMY ARE TOO POWERFUL. WE CANNOT
MATCH THEIR VESSELS OR THEIR WEAPONRY. STARFLEET
WILL WITHDRAW!

A black and white comic book illustration of a space battle. Several Starfleet ships, including a large command ship and several smaller fighters, are shown in various orientations. A large, bright explosion is the central focus, with several ships positioned around it. Trailing lines suggest movement and firing. The background is dark with small stars.



SOL! HAMMON! WHY HAVE YOU BROKEN
FORMATION? WHAT ARE YOU FIRING AT?

A black and white comic book illustration showing a close-up of a Starfleet command ship. It is firing a large energy weapon, creating a massive, bright explosion. Several smaller fighters are visible in the background, some of which are also firing. The scene is dynamic with many lines indicating movement and energy.

ASK ZORR THAT QUESTION.

ZORR'S COMMAND SHIP TOOK A DIRECT HIT.

I MISJUDGED THE EARTHLINGS—
KILL THEM.



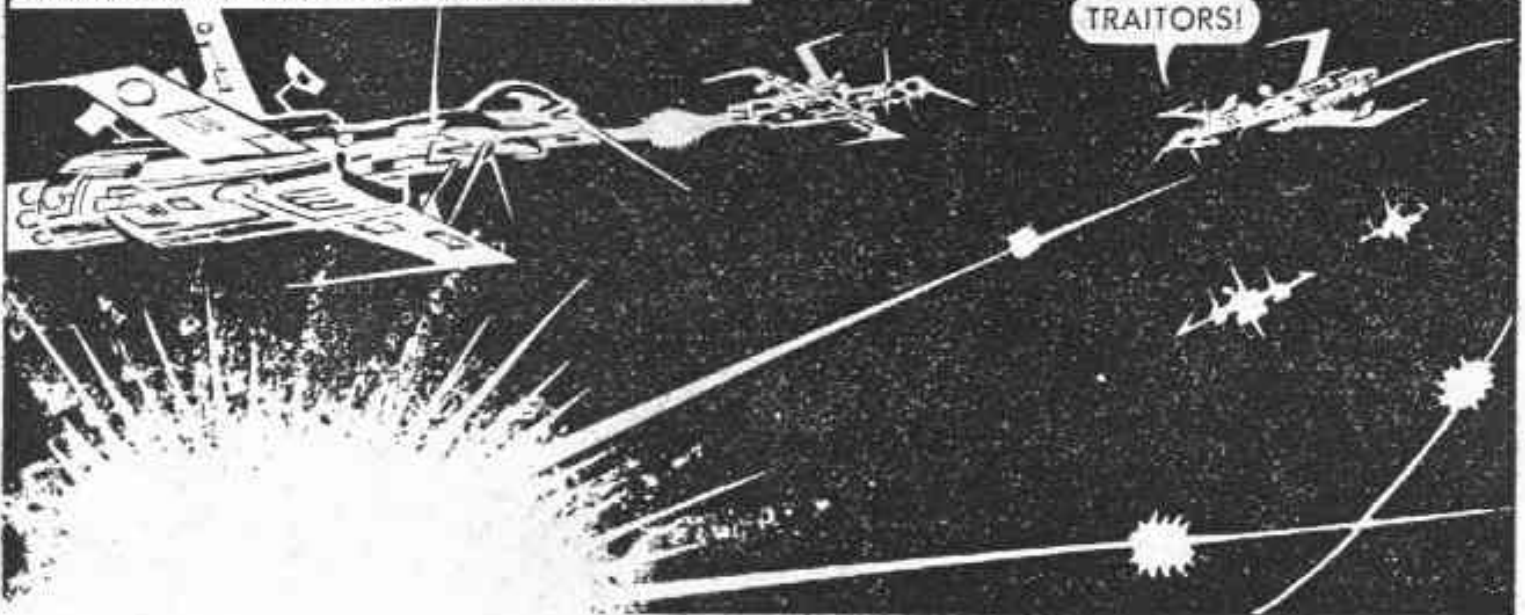
THIS IS HAMMON CALLING ALL
DRAGON CREWS. HERE IS OUR
CHANCE TO HELP FINISH ZORR'S
EVIL PLAN OF CONQUEST—
FOREVER...

W-WHAT DO YOU THINK WE OUGHT TO DO,
MARWOL? IS— COULD HE BE RIGHT?

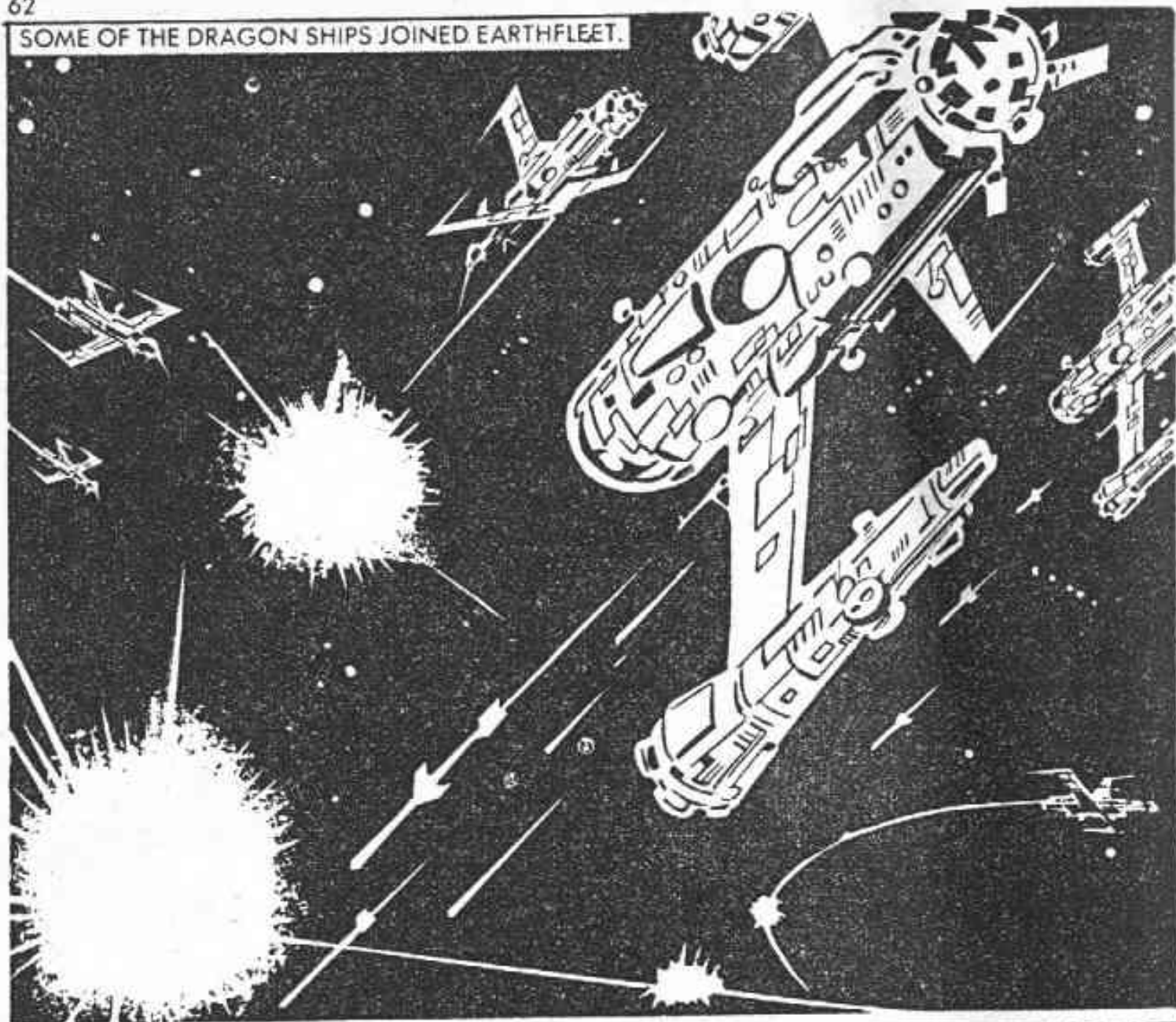


DRAGON SHIP TURNED UPON DRAGON SHIP—

TRAITORS!



SOME OF THE DRAGON SHIPS JOINED EARTHFLEET.

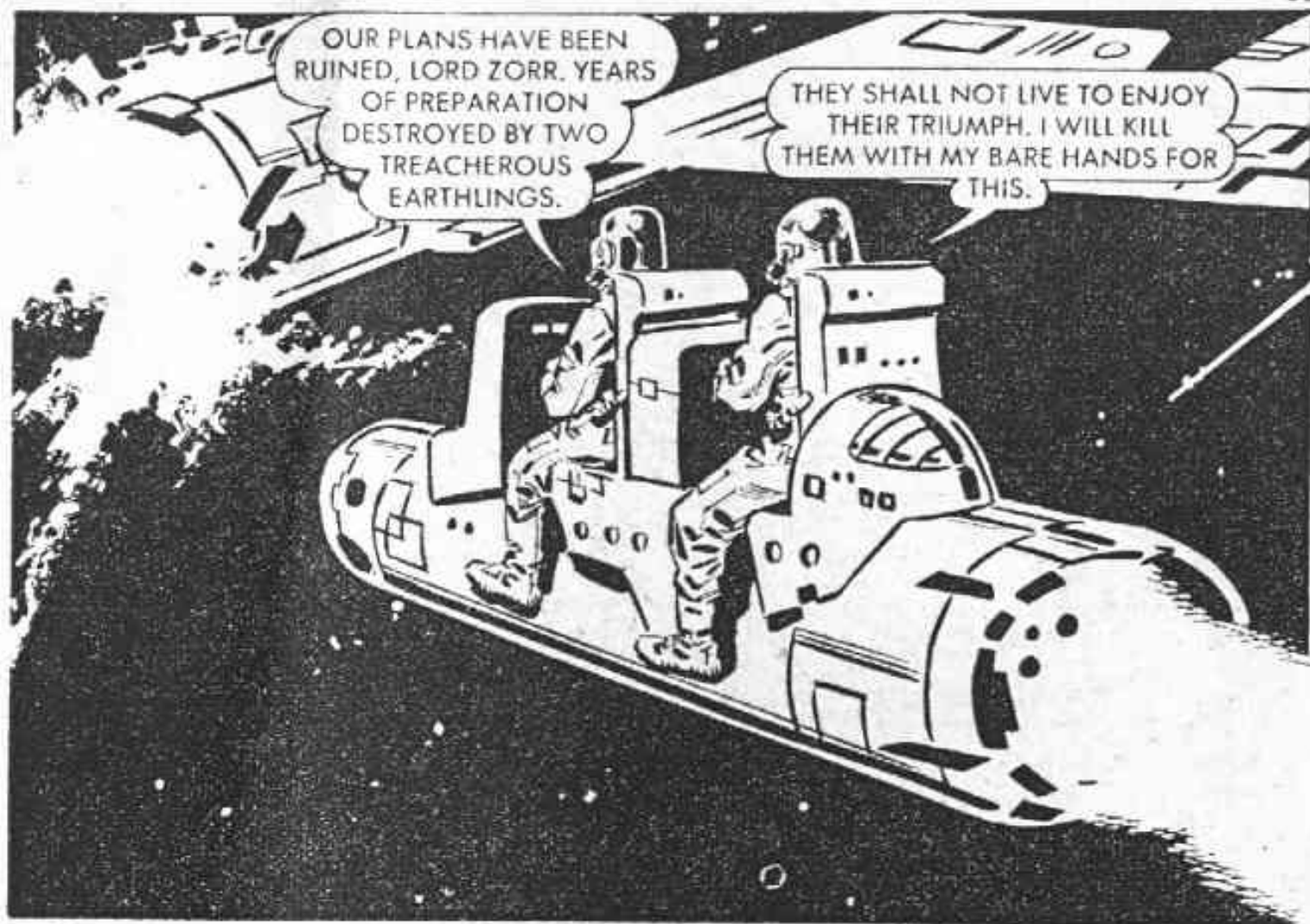


AT THE HEIGHT OF THE STRUGGLE—

A HIT! THE ESCAPE BAY
HAS BEEN DESTROYED—
WE'RE TRAPPED.

WE CAN ONLY DRIFT AROUND UNTIL
THE BATTLE IS OVER. LET'S
HOPE THE RIGHT SIDE WIN,
HAMMON.







MANY SPACIALS LATER—

THANKS TO YOU AND THE OTHER YOUNG MEN WHO CHANGED SIDES, WE WIPED OUT EVERYTHING THAT ZORR PUT INTO SPACE. WE SHALL TAKE HIM TO EARTH FOR TRIAL.



ALONG WITH THE OTHER SURVIVORS, I WILL BE RETURNING TO MY HOMEWORLD. I AM SORRY THAT I THOUGHT YOU TRAITORS. GOODNESS KNOWS WHAT WE WOULD HAVE DONE IF STAR FLEET HAD NOT GOT YOUR MESSAGE! GOODBYE, FRIENDS.



A FEW UNITS LATER—



ONE GOOD THING
ABOUT ZORR...



... IS THAT HIS TRAINING METHODS
GAINED US PROMOTION TO FLIGHT
LIEUTENANTS IN CHARGE OF A PRISON
TRANSIT SHIP.

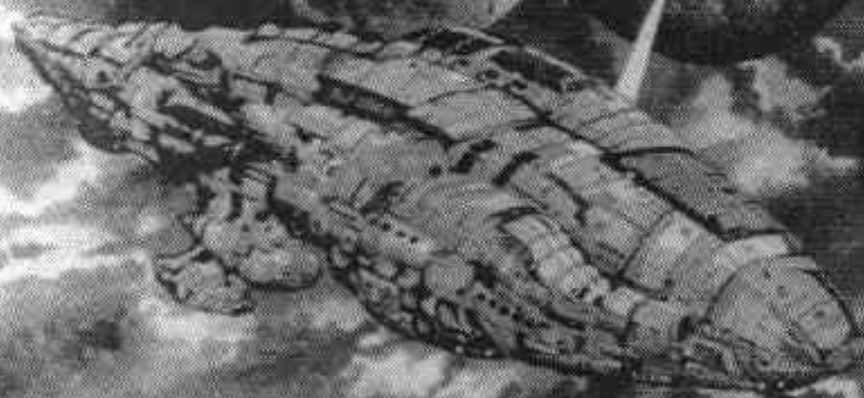
A PRISON TRANSIT SHIP WAS THE FIRST STEP
TO THE GAINING OF A SPACE PILOT'S GALACTIC WINGS—THE AWARD THAT ENTITLED
A PILOT TO COMMAND HIS OWN STARCROISER. SOL AND HAMMON WERE WELL ON THEIR WAY.

COME STARBLAZING

with the other

STARBLAZER

SPACE ADVENTURE IN PICTURES No. 50



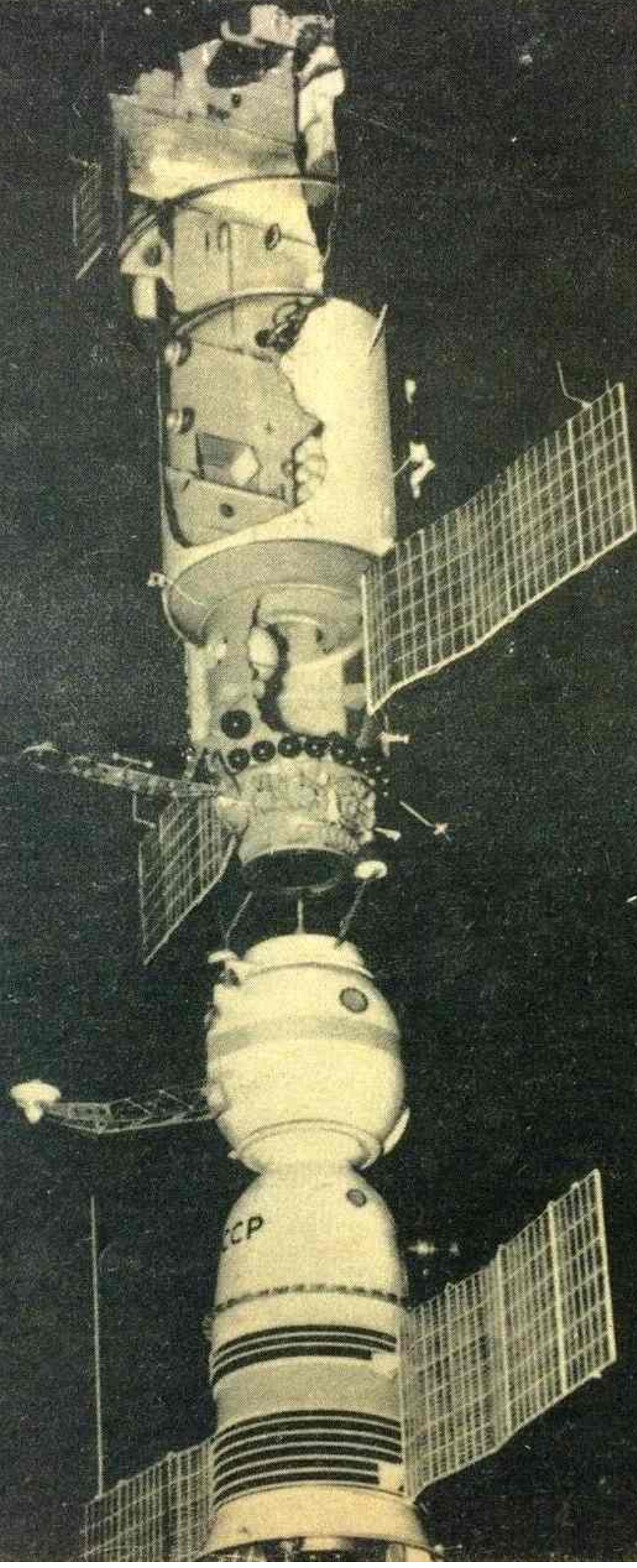
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MOONSPLITTER

ALSO ON SALE THIS MONTH

STARBLAZERS

IN THE CONQUEST OF SPACE 51



A record-breaking spaceflight was made by Russian cosmonauts Lyankov and Ryumin of Soyuz 32 in 1979. They remained on board the Salyut space station for 175 days, before returning safely to Earth.